

June 7, 2023

The Honorable Jason Smith
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
1100 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
1100 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Neal,

The Alliance to Fight for Health Care writes in support of H.R. 1843, the Telehealth Expansion Act of 2023 and H.R. 3800, the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act. We applaud the committee for championing increased access to telehealth and chronic disease prevention and we believe these two bills will lead to improved care and lower health care costs for workers, employers, and the federal government.

The **Alliance to Fight for Health Care** is a diverse coalition comprised of businesses, patient advocates, employer organizations, unions, health care companies, consumer groups, and other stakeholders that support employer-provided health coverage. Together, we are working to ensure that employer-provided coverage remains an available and affordable option for working Americans and their families. The Alliance is dedicated to pursuing policies that expand access, improve affordability, and lower costs for our health care system and patients everywhere.

The Alliance supports policies that reduce barriers to high value care, including enabling plans and employers to offer more high-value care pre-deductible. Laws and rules limiting pre-deductible coverage for chronic disease prevention and telehealth inhibit employers' ability to offer high-value and potentially life-saving care to their employees on an equitable basis. Because of this, the Alliance supports legislation being considered by the committee this week:

- The Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act ([H.R. 3800](#)), which ensures flexibility for employers and health plans to offer certain chronic disease prevention drugs and services pre-deductible, and
- The Telehealth Expansion Act of 2023 ([H.R. 1843/S.1001](#)), which makes permanent the provision that allows employers and health plans the flexibility to offer telehealth services pre-deductible.

90% of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual health care spending is for people with chronic and mental health conditions¹. It is common sense to give employers and health plans more flexibility to offer plan designs that make it easier for patients to manage their chronic conditions. Several studies show plan designs that provide high-value medications before the plan deductible lead to increased prescription adherence, particularly by underserved populations². For these reasons, the Alliance strongly supports H.R. 3800.

Additionally, the Alliance encourages Congress to extend the current provision that allows employers and health plans to offer telehealth pre-deductible. The current flexibility expires in 2024

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/costs/index.htm>

²<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7676281/>

and the Alliance strongly supports making this flexibility permanent. Without an extension of current flexibility, employers would be required to charge employees more to access this care, creating a barrier to treatment.

Importantly, increased access to telehealth has improved access to mental health care and substance use disorder treatment, particularly for people living in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, as noted in a May 2022 [study](#) published in Health Affairs. In 2022, 75% of large employers [offered](#) access to lower- or no-cost mental health support through their tele-mental health provider and 33% offered lower cost counseling services at the worksite – bringing services directly to employees wherever they are.

The Alliance to Fight for Health Care is very supportive of H.R. 3800 and H.R. 1843. We urge the Committee to advance these important policies. We look forward to working together on a bipartisan basis to make health care more affordable and advance the health care system for all patients.

Respectfully,

The Alliance to Fight for Health Care

CC:

Representative Wenstrup
Representative Blumenauer
Representative Steel
Representative Lee
Representative Smith
Representative Schneider